DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 386 HE 020 699

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TITLE The Impact of an "Agricultural Educator" on Curriculum at Agricultural Colleges.
PUB DATE [87]
NOTE 9p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of International Agricultural Education (Chevy Chase, MD, April 24-26, 1987).
PUB TYPE Viewpoints (120) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Agricultural Colleges; *Agricultural Education; College Curriculum; College Faculty; Consultation Programs; *Developing Nations; *Educational Development; Educational Needs; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *International Educational Exchange; Marketing

ABSTRACT

Ways to involve agricultural educators in international development projects are considered. Agricultural educators with expertise in the field of educational process in agricultural education are needed. These individuals should be proficient in needs assessment and program and curriculum development. The skills of agricultural educators are especially needed in the development of agricultural colleges. Agricultural educators have realized the contributions they could make and have attempted to sell the need for their services, but this tactic of selling agriculture education has been only partially successful. A new strategy that relies on the marketing concept is needed. Agricultural educators need to become more aware of the type of individuals agencies are seeking. Individuals need to be flexible, international in scope of knowledge, and able to focus on the local problems. It is important they realize that the U.S. program they know is only one model of agricultural development and not appropriate for all situations. The profession must continue to get their message to policymakers and employers. (SW)

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The Impact of an "Agricultural Educator" on Curriculum at Agricultural Colleges

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Introduction

During recent years there have been a number of colleges of agriculture around the world that have expended large amounts of funds to improve their programs. The type of institutions being developed range from institutions that award certificates for single year programs up through diploma granting institutions to those that award the baccalaureate and post graduate degrees. Each institution is developed, expanded or improved to meet a perceived educational need in a country.

The types of institutions being envisioned vary widely depending on the needs and resources of the country. In a number of cases the needs are for certificate and diploma level institutions. Often these colleges of agriculture are under the direction of the Ministry of Agriculture. The products of the colleges are visualized as individuals that can either become employees of the Ministry of Agriculture or become farmers.

These colleges often have been in existence for a number of years and often are the object of much criticism from their own Ministry of Agriculture for not being able to produce the type of professional agriculturalist the Ministry would like to employ. The result is a massive revision of curriculum and

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facilities to attempt to alleviate perceived problems. Unfortunately, all too often, the revamped curricula are not organized to meet the problem and, in fact, may produce individuals farther from the objective than the original program.

Part of the problem lies in the type of individuals asked to give advice on structuring the new or revised program at the colleges. More often than not, almost anyone who has ever taught an agricultural course at a university may be looked on as an "expert" in program development in agricultural colleges. The result, too often, is an attempt to replicate a U.S. university educational situation in a setting where this is not what is expected or needed. Instead of moving toward meeting the personnel needs for agriculturally trained individuals, often a more theoretically inclined output is developed that frustrate potential employers and graduates alike. Employers complain of graduates that don't fit and graduates complain of jobs not in accord with their new training and aspirations.

Problem

The situation outlined in the introduction to the paper poses a number of problems that must be overcome if the type of institutions desired by countries are to be developed. A major problem to be overcome is to differentiate between little "a" and little "e" and big "A" and big "E" in Agricultural Education. Everyone who teaches in a college of agriculture at a university is an "agricultural educator". A few of the staff

are "Agricultural Educators".

Agricultural Educators are individuals who are professionals whose areas of expertise lie in the field of educational process in agricultural education. These individuals are proficient among other things, in needs assessment, program and curriculum development consistent with principles and practices established within the profession. Rather than being agriculturalist that specialize in a technical area they are agriculturalists that specialize in the educational process. These are individuals that teach agriculturalists to improve their educational abilities.

The Agricultural Educator should be an important asset to any team working to improve a college of agriculture. More often than not, these individuals are not involved because of the confusion about who is an Agricultural Educator. In a number of projects the need for someone to provide guidance in the need assessment, program and curriculum development areas is readily seen by project planners. The problem arises when anyone in the college of agriculture is recognized as being able to fill the "Agricultural Educator" role. The result is the agricultural educator tends to direct the emerging institution toward what is most familiar. In many cases, this leads to an attempt to replicate a U.S. university situation in places where neither the resources are available nor the need is apparent for that level of development.

The expertise area of the Agricultural Educator is seldom

recognized as being important in the institutional development process of these emerging institutions. The fact of the matter is that few really understand the capabilities of Agricultural Educators in the development process. The consequence is that institutions continue to make costly mistakes as they develop that could be avoided if the expertise of an Agricultural Educator had been utilized. Agricultural Educators have for some time attempted to sell the expertise they possess in the international arena. Success in selling Agricultural Education as a part of international development projects has not produced as much participation as desired.

The question to be solved is how to get Agricultural Educators involved in international development projects. I believe the solution lies somewhere in the area of "marketing". There is a need in international development for someone with the specialties of an Agricultural Educator, however, few Agricultural Educators are utilized in critical phases of agricultural college institution building.

I believe we in Agricultural Education have been attempting to "sell" Agricultural Education" as a part of international development. Our success rate has not been exceptional. Perhaps the use of marketing techniques would help to improve the rate of Agricultural Educator involvement in international projects.

Carmen and Uhl[1] define marketing as "the process in a society

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[1] James M. Carman, Phillips and Duncan's Marketing Principles and Methods, Richard D. Irwin, Inc., Homewood, Illinois, 1973, p. 7.

by which the demand structure for products and services is anticipated or enlarged and satisfied through the conception, promotion, exchange, and physical distribution of such goods and services." Marketing then is the process of increasing the demand for a product. Stanton[2] explains there is a difference between selling and marketing. "Under the selling concept the company makes a product and then tries various methods of selling to persuade the customer to buy the article. In effect, the company is bending consumer demand to fit the company's supply. Just the opposite occurs under the *marketing* concept. The company finds out what the customer wants and then tries to develop a product which will satisfy that want and still yield a profit. Now the company is bending its supply to the will of consumer demand." He summarizes "the contrasts between selling as follows:

Selling	**Marketing**
1. Emphasis is on the product.	1. Emphasis is on customers' wants.
2. Company first makes the product and then figures out how to sell it profitably.	2. Company first determines what the customers want, and then the firm figures out how to profitably make and deliver a product to satisfy those wants.
3. External, market orientation.	3. Internal, company orientation.
4. Emphasizes market (buyers') needs.	4. Emphasizes company (seller') needs.

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[2]William J. Stanton, Fundamentals of Marketing, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, New York, 1978, p. 11.

Agricultural Educators need to put more emphasis on the "customer". The "customer" in this instance is the agency that is doing the hiring. For most of the projects that I have worked on over the years that agency has been USAID. We, as Agricultural Educators, must get a better handle on what USAID wants when it is assembling a team. Yes, we do have an important product from our perspective. However, USAID may not share our view of our expertise. For instance, to many professionals in agriculture, an Agricultural Educator is someone that deals with a secondary vocational agriculture program or a traditional extension program. These programs are often viewed by those outside the profession as out dated and the professionals associated with the programs as stiff and inflexible individuals.

Individuals interested in participating in international projects must prepare themselves for the environment in which they will be expected to work. Often, they must forget much of what works so well in the domestic setting. Probably the first thing that an individual must come to grips with is the fact that what takes place in the U.S. is a model and not a blueprint for every other region of the world. The Agricultural Educator must listen carefully to problems discovered on the local scene and just as carefully examine the ideas put forward by local staff. The solutions developed for a country must fit that country. Individuals interested in participating in international programs need to become internationalists. They

must become familiar with other models of agricultural education than the U.S. model and know how to adapt models to fit a local situation.

Even if the profession is successful in finding out what is wanted by folks running international programs and they are successful in developing the type of individuals required, there is always the continuing need to showcase the capabilities of the profession. Thus emphasis continues to be placed on the value of an organization such as AIAE. The development of a journal would also be helpful as a means to getting into print many of the ideas of the profession.

Summary

There is a role for Agricultural Educators in international development. The skills of Agricultural Educators are needed especially in the development of agricultural colleges. It is critical that individuals that understand agriculture and the principles of educational process be involved in educational institution building.

Agricultural Educators have realized the contributions they could make and have attempted to sell the need for their services. The tactic of selling Agriculture Education has been only partially successful.

A new strategy needs to be developed that relies on the marketing concept. Agricultural Educators need to become more aware of the type of individuals agencies are seeking. They next need to hone their international skills in such a manner as

to meet the needs and expectations of agencies employing individuals in international assignments.

Individuals need to be flexible, international in scope of knowledge and able to focus on the problems of the local situation. They need to have the ability to develop recommendations that are appropriate for the locality in which they are working. In addition, it is important that they realize that the program they worked with in the U.S. is only one model of agricultural development and not a blueprint for all situations.

The profession must continue to get their message in front of policy makers and employers. The work of AIAE should be continued and improved where possible. The written word is a powerful tool. Perhaps the development of a journal could be another avenue to help others become aware of the importance of Agricultural Education in international development.